

Arguments/Remarks:

Applicants thank Examiner Chung for the careful examination of this application and the clear explanation of the claim rejections. In response to the Office Action of May 11, 2006, applicants amend claims 2-11, 13-24, and 26-34 to properly depend from claims 1, 12, and 25 respectively.

Regarding the 103(a) rejection against 1-34, applicants respectfully submit that because the motivation as stated in the Office Action is not supported in the references, the Office Action fails to establish a case of prima facie obviousness and the rejections are therefore improper.

The primary reference cited in the Office Action is the Fintel patent (US 6,920,585). It discloses a resource management system that automatically schedules test for a communication system according to the availability of communication resources requested by the tests. The Office Action concedes that Fintel et al. does not disclose for testing at least one mixed signal semiconductor device but argues that Sugamori discloses an apparatus for testing at least one mixed signal semiconductor device and therefore it would have been obvious to incorporate the apparatus for testing at least one mixed signal semiconductor device into the test apparatus of Fintel. The motivation suggested in the Office Action is that "different types of test, such as analog circuit test and digital circuit test can be performed at the same time."

This argument must fail for at least the following reasons:

1. Fintel discloses a resource management system specifically for a communication system. It is well known in the art of testing that a system for testing a communication system and a system for testing a mixed signal semiconductor device belong to completely nonanalogous art. It is nonsensical to try to combine a communication system tester with a mixed signal semiconductor device testing system.
2. Sugamori discloses a test system that has multiple tester module operating independently:

In the semiconductor test system of the present invention, a test system is formed by freely combining a plurality of tester modules having identical or different capabilities where each of the tester module operates independently from one another thereby being able to test an analog signal block and a digital signal block of the device under test at the same time.¹

It is clear that if the semiconductor device testing system of the Sugamori patent were to combine with the communication system testing system in the Fintel patent, the Fintel tester would have to add a plurality of tester modules having identical or different capabilities. It clearly defeats the intended function of the Fintel invention, which "automatically schedules tests for a communication system according to the availability of communication resources requested by the tests."²

Because the references do not support the motivation suggested in the Office Action, applicants respectfully submit that a prima facie case of obviousness is not established and claims 1-34 stand patentable over the cited references.

Respectfully submitted,
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¹ US 6,536,006, col. 1, ll. 6-20.

² US 6,920,585, abstract.